



# Guns and Children:

A Fascination That Can't Be Ignored

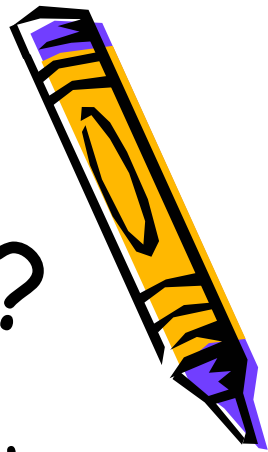


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# How Many Guns?



As you come in this afternoon, write down the:

- Number of guns in your home?
- Number of guns in your parent's home?
- Number of guns in your neighbor's home?
- Number of all of these guns that are all locked and unloaded?



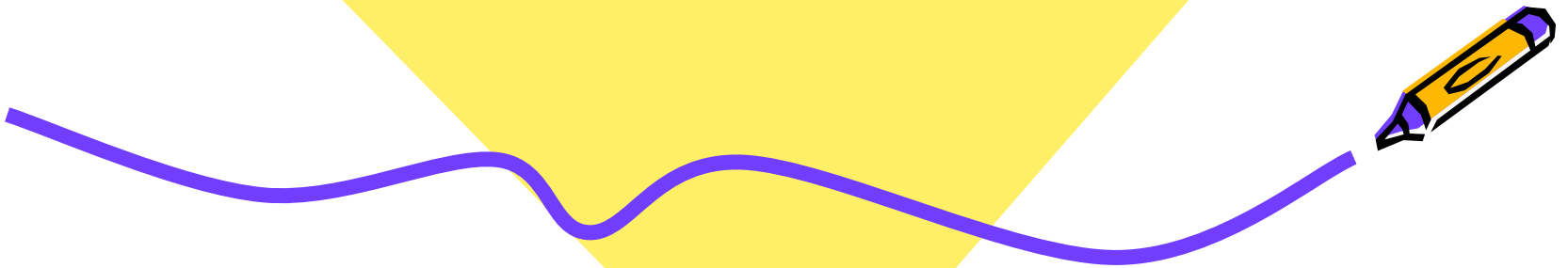
# This afternoon we will look at:

- The prevalence of guns in our culture and the myths that surround them.
- What this means for our children and our country.
- What can we, as individuals and community members, do to change the myths and minimize the gun risk to children.





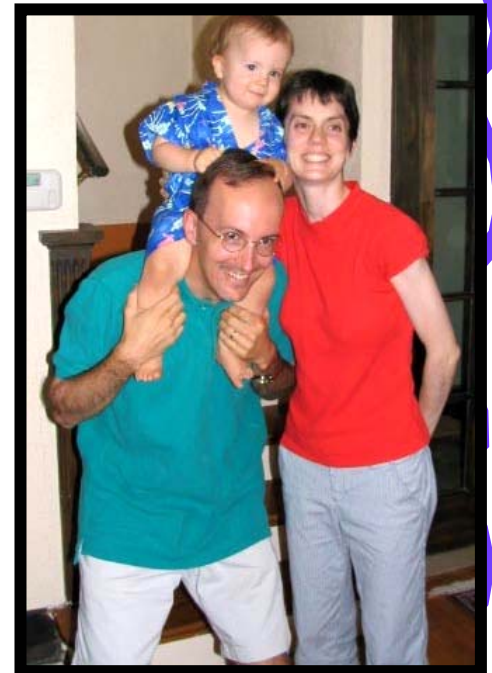
So how many guns do  
we have ?

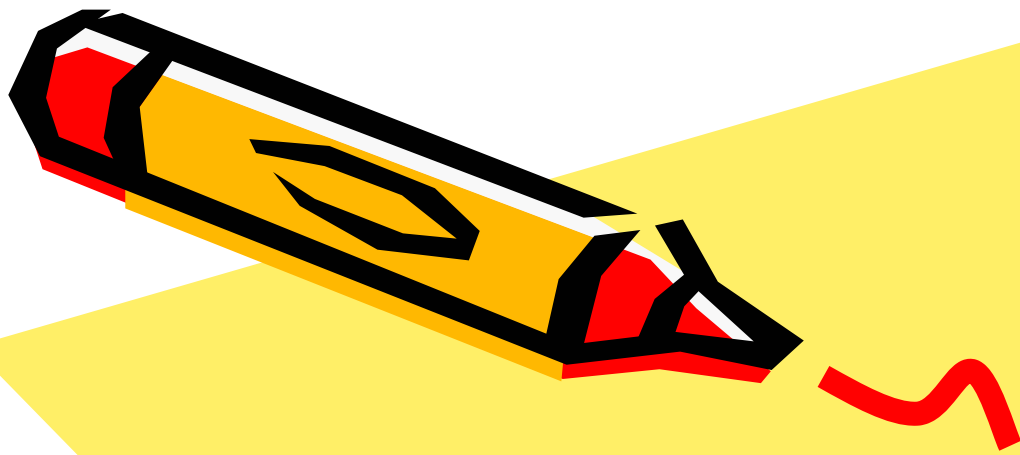


There are an estimated 250 million guns in the United States, with approximately 2 million new hand guns sold annually.

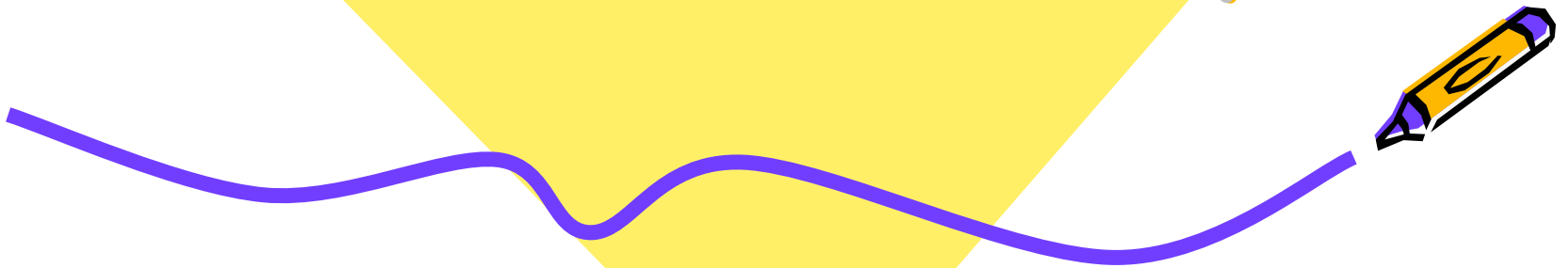


Enough for every woman, man and child to have one.





The U.S. has more guns in  
its homes than any other  
industrialized country.



Who possesses the majority of these guns?

# U.S. Gun Owners Are Predominately....

- Male
- 30 years of age or older
- White
- Married



Question: Who makes up the majority of Congress and the Michigan legislature?



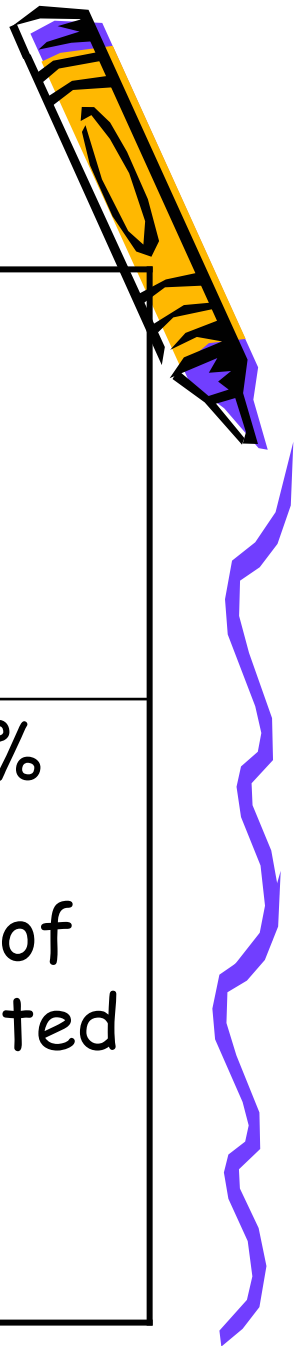
# Gun Possession

Rural individuals are more likely to have guns than urban individuals.

Whites are more likely to have guns than African Americans.

Hand guns are more likely to be found in urban homes and long guns are more likely to be found in rural homes.

Approximately 20% of white males possess over 90% of all guns in the United States.







Long guns are most often purchased for hunting.

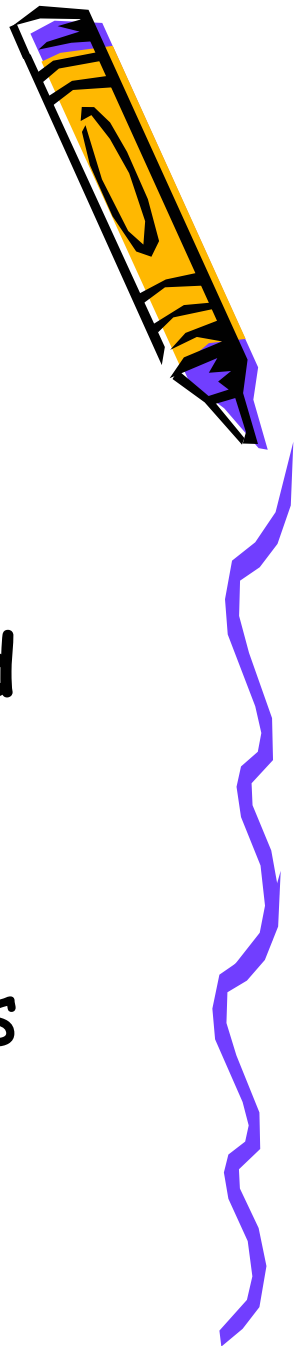
Hand guns are most often purchased for protection.

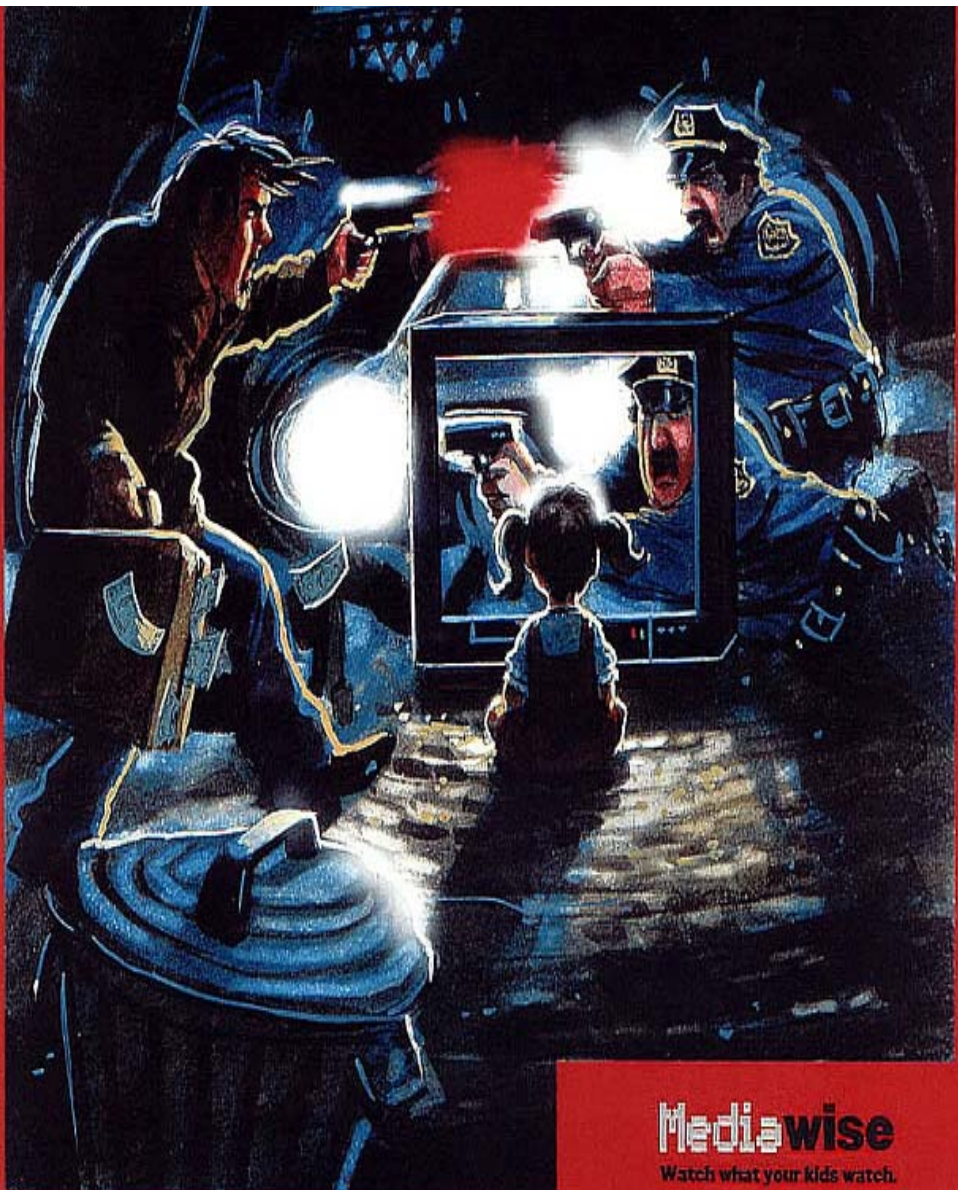


**Studies also show that  
high numbers of these  
gun owners....**


keep their guns loaded and unlocked  
regardless of gun safety training.

This is specially true of hand guns  
purchased for protection.



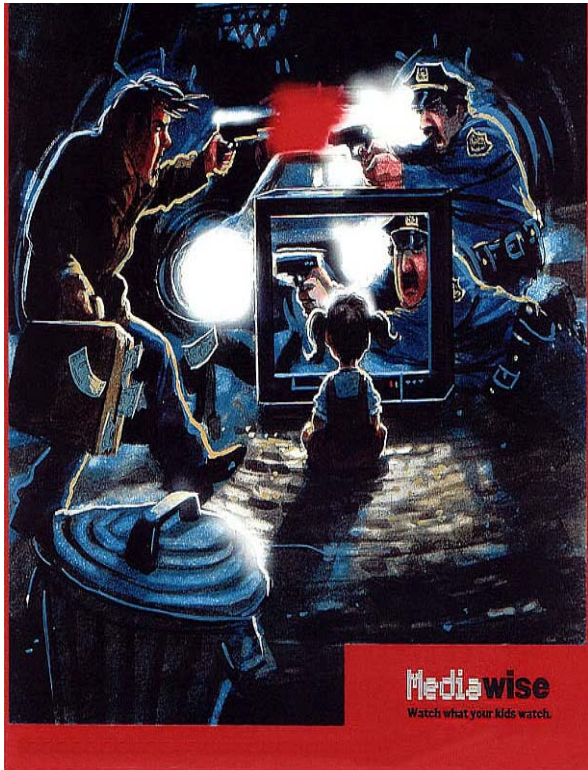


**Mediawise**  
Watch what your kids watch.



Children  
Are Also  
Exposed  
Through  
The Media.

# MEDIA VIOLENCE



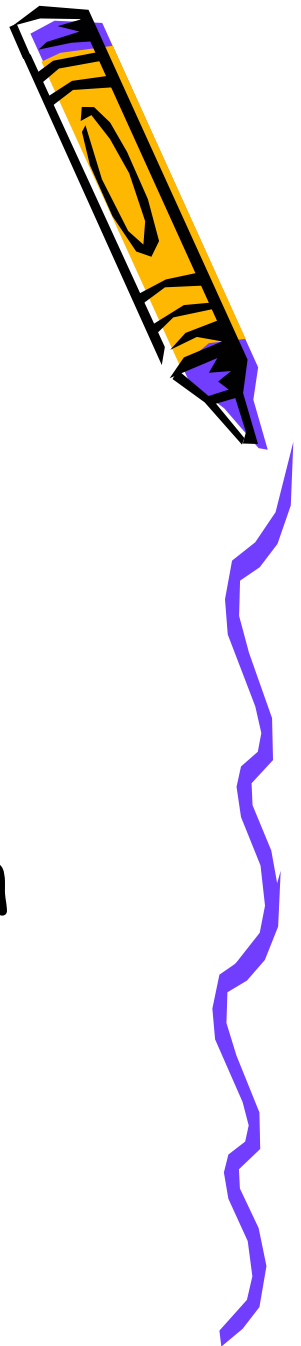
- 2/3 of all TV programming contains violence.
- Involves a vast amount of weapons.
- 25% of the violent TV interactions involve handguns.



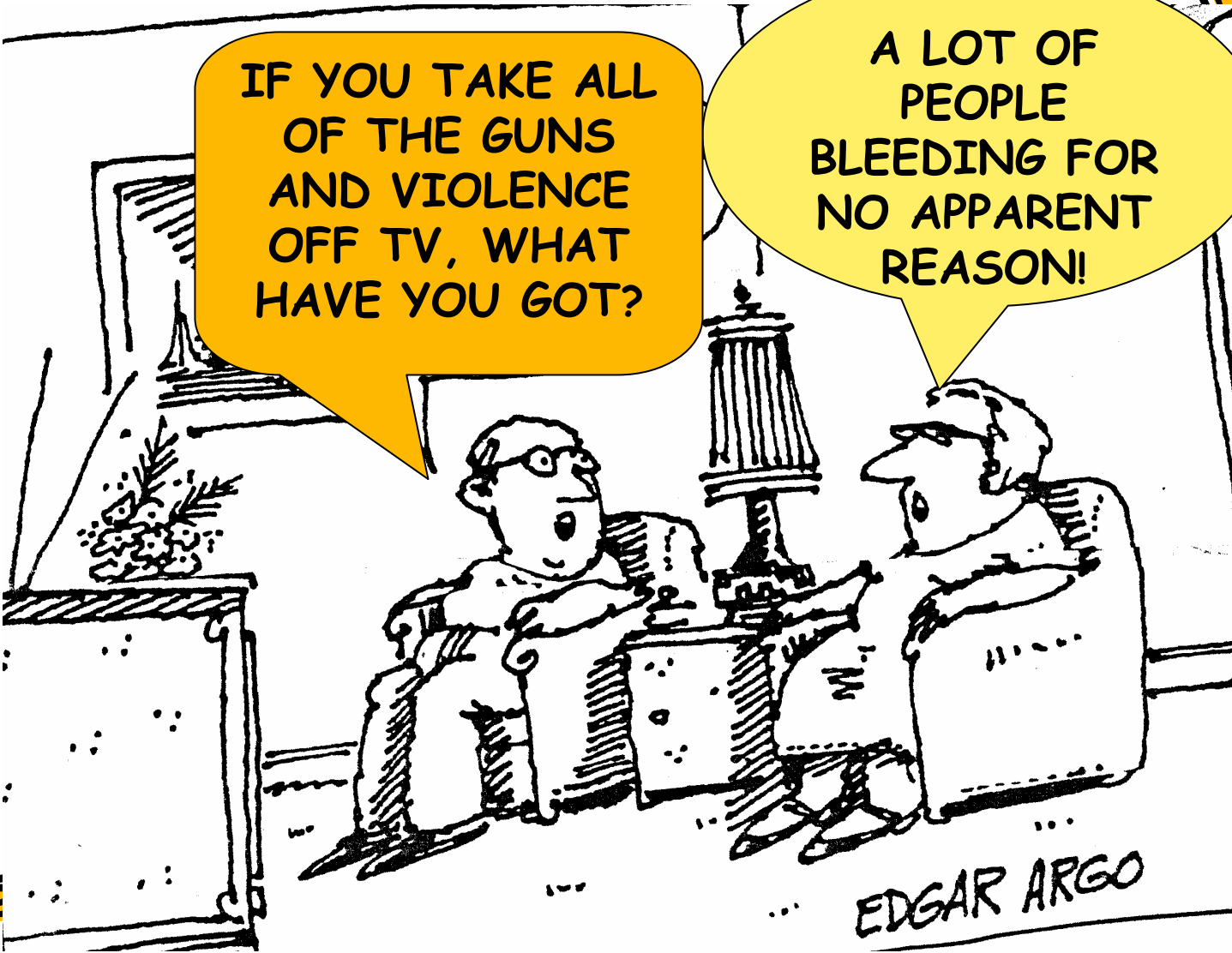
**Children will see on TV alone  
by the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade.....**

**8,000 murders on children's  
programs.**

**1,000,000 acts of violence on  
children's programs.**







IF YOU TAKE ALL  
OF THE GUNS  
AND VIOLENCE  
OFF TV, WHAT  
HAVE YOU GOT?

A LOT OF  
PEOPLE  
BLEEDING FOR  
NO APPARENT  
REASON!

EDGAR ARGO

With guns outnumbering  
children in this country-  
3 to 1,  
they are easily accessible and of  
interest to children.



For example, 975  
weapons were  
found in Michigan  
schools in 2004.





Children, when surveyed,  
repeatedly say they can get a  
gun if needed. 1/3 have said  
they can get a gun in less than  
an hour.





# In Michigan Schools, Gun Related Expulsions Over The Two Last Years



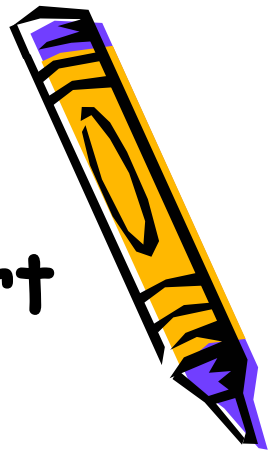
Year	Handgun	Long Guns	Other Firearms	Total
2005	29	2	25	56
2004	39	2	24	65



2004-2005 Gun Free School Report

Further, there is an organized effort  
by the Gun Industry and the NRA

to recruit children to guns  
through:  
increased advertising,  
video games, and  
by blocking attempts to stop  
black market sale of guns.





So what do parents think  
about the risk to their  
children from guns?



# Most Parents Believe Their Children....



- Would act responsibly if they found a gun by leaving the area, telling an adult, and leaving the gun alone.
- Could tell the difference between a real gun and a toy.

Note: Only a very small group of parents thought their children would touch a gun.



# Parents when asked...



- 87%--believe their children will not touch a gun if they find one.
- 52%--believe their children are "too smart" or "know better" than to touch a gun.
- 40%--based their beliefs on specific instructions they gave to their children.
- 12%--stored their guns locked and unloaded.



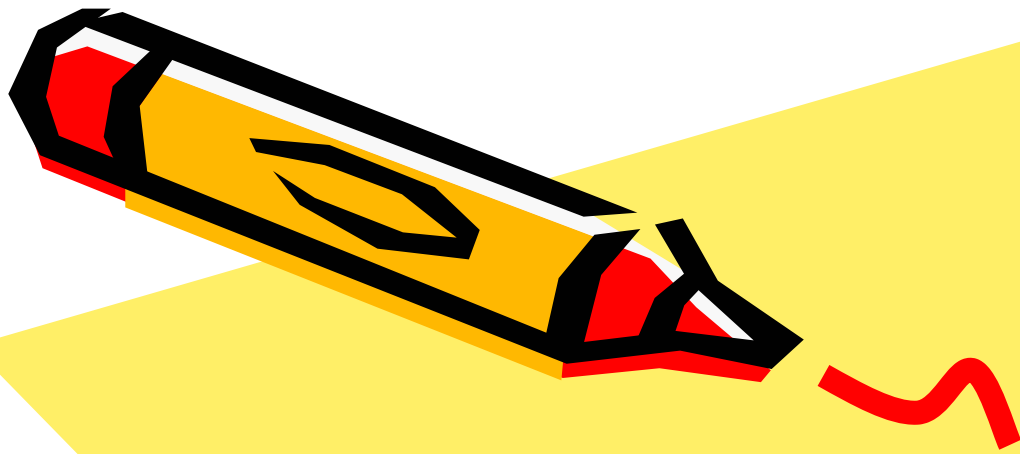
Connor and Wesolowski, *Pediatrics*  
Vol. 111 No. 2, February 2003

# "We had guns in the house when we grew up....



- Our parents taught us to leave the guns alone.
- We knew we weren't to touch them and we didn't.
- Children respect guns if they are taught not to touch them and also taught how to properly use them.





# A World Full Of Guns

What are your thoughts after  
watching this?





Are American homes safer  
from gun violence than other  
countries due to having guns in  
our homes?





# Homes That Have Guns In Them, Have A



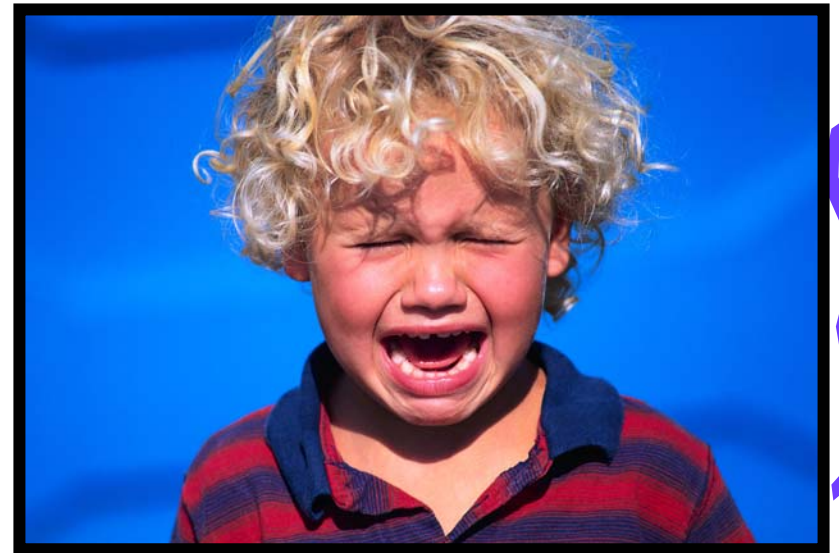
- 3 times higher rate of homicide,
- 5 times higher rate of suicide,
- 23 times higher chance of being killed by a family member or friend than by a stranger...

Than homes that don't have guns in them.





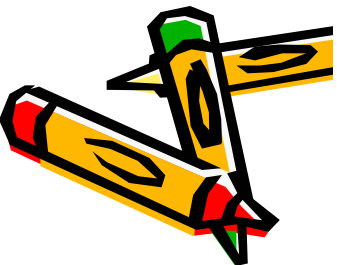
88% of children killed or injured by guns are shot in their own homes or the homes of a friend or relative.



# Gun Violence Kills More American Children Than...



- Cancer
- Pneumonia
- Influenza
- Asthma
- HIV/AIDS  
Combined.



# The United States Gun Death Rate Among Children...

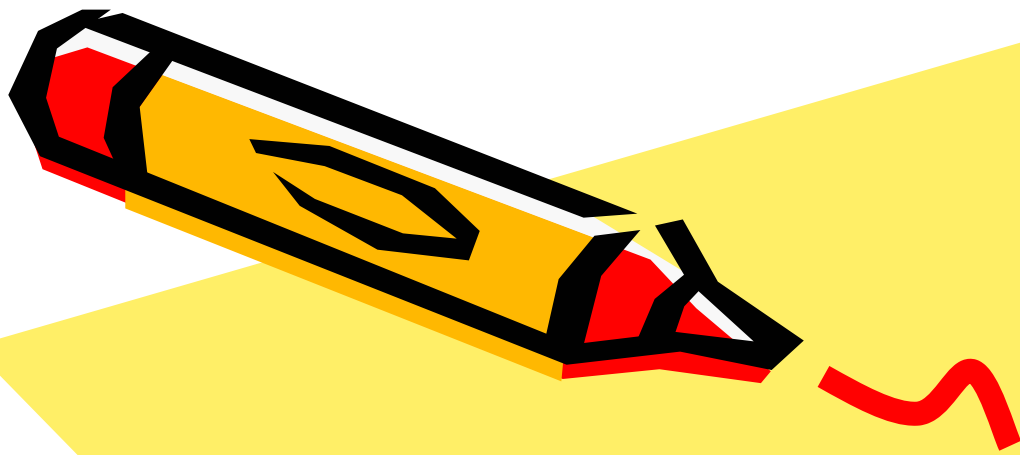
Is 12 times higher than in 25 other industrialized countries.

Compared to the combined total of other countries, our children are 16 times more likely to be murdered by a gun.

11 times more likely to commit suicide using a gun.

9 times more likely to die in a firearm accident .



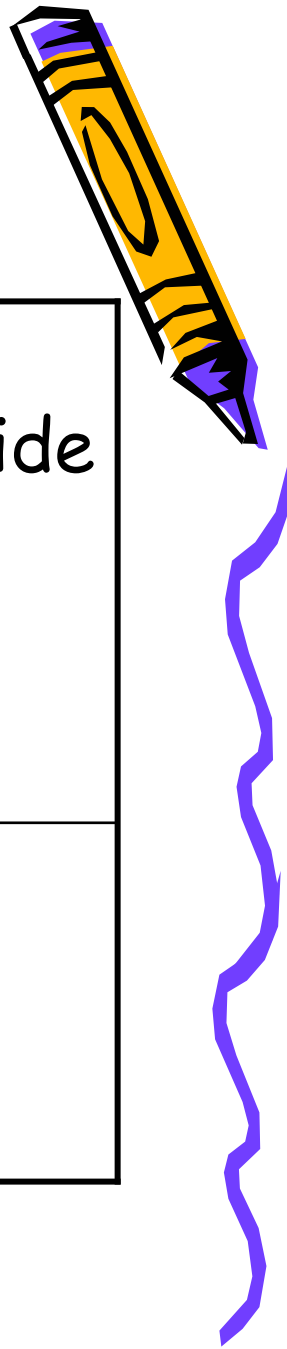



# Stories of Lost Children

One child is killed every three hours,  
more than 50 American children a week.



# In Comparison....



	U.S. Child Gun Deaths (2001)	U.S. Soldiers' Deaths in Iraq (3 years)	Total Worldwide Bird Flu Deaths
# of Deaths	3,365	2,300	100



Almost 100,000 U.S. child deaths in the last 30 years.

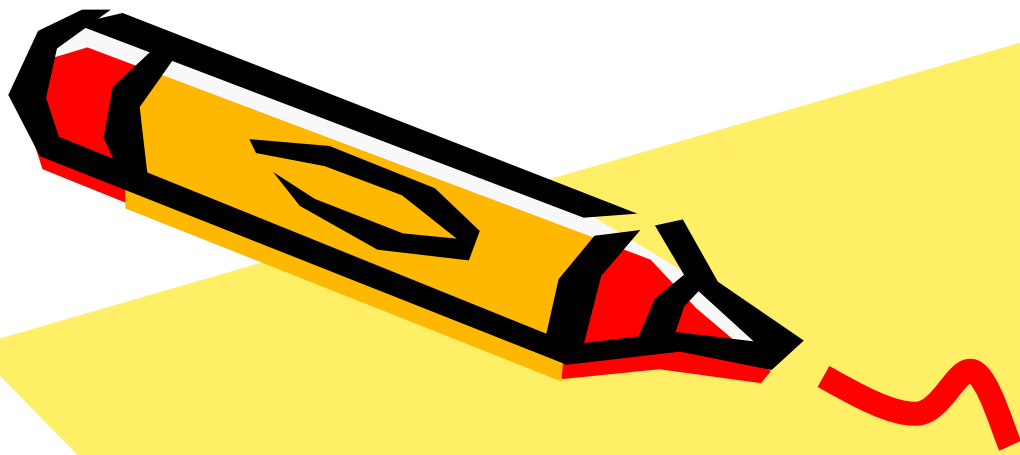
# Further, In A Four Year Period in 1990's



- There were also an estimated 103,814 children, 5-14 years, shot with **nonpowder firearms** (BB and pellet guns).







Will teaching children to  
leave a gun alone, don't  
touch and tell an adult,  
protect our children?





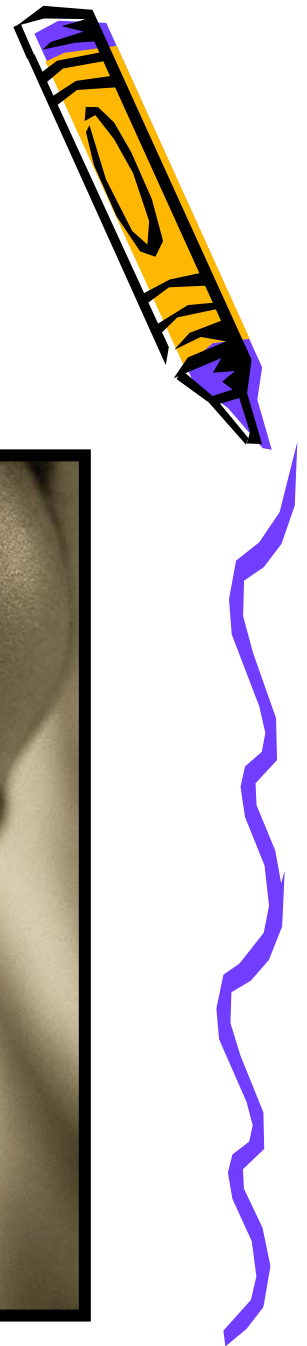


# A World Of Guns

What are your thoughts?



# Repeated Studies Have Shown



- Teaching firearm safety to children is a failure.
- Parents' perceptions are inaccurate.
- Children are fascinated with guns and will handle them.



Even with this knowledge,  
we as a country ....

continue to shift the responsibility and  
burden of child protection related to gun  
safety from the adult to the child.

We say guns don't kill, people do. We can  
teach children to be safe.

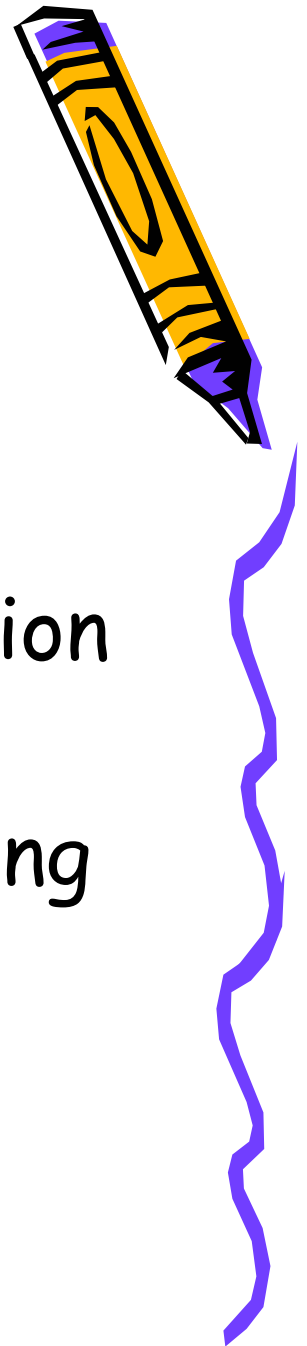




**As Parents and Teachers,  
How Do We Address This  
Fascination And Availability?**



# What happened when children were dying....



- In car accidents?
- From accidentally taking prescription medication?
- From drowning in backyard swimming pools?



Product safety approaches were taken. We must push for protections similar to .....



- Childhood poisoning---parent education, child proof packaging, proper storage.
- Motor vehicle safety---design of car, child passenger seat requirements.
- Pool safety—fencing and alarm systems.



The Gun Industry is Exempt from  
Complying with Any U.S. Federal  
Health and Safety Requirements,

such as, trigger pressure on hand guns or  
internal trigger locks, all of which are done in  
other countries.

**Teddy bears and toy guns have to meet  
higher consumer health and safety  
standards than firearms.**



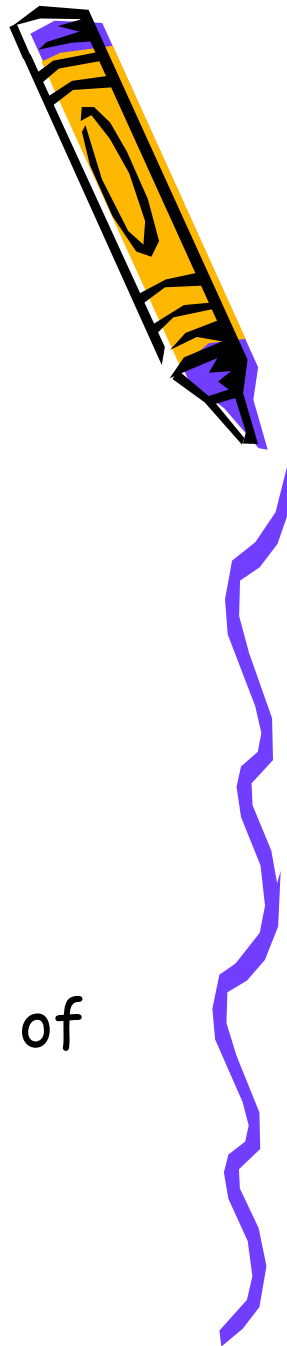
This needs to change if we  
are to protect our children.

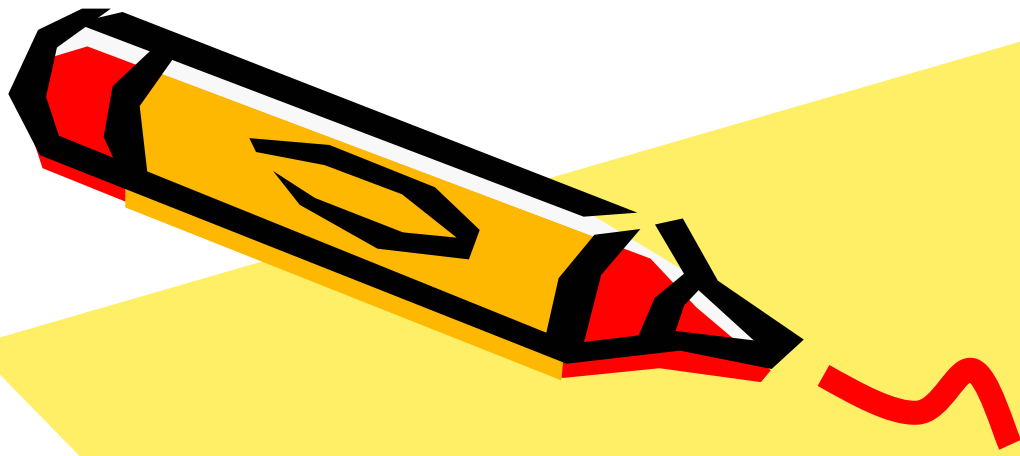




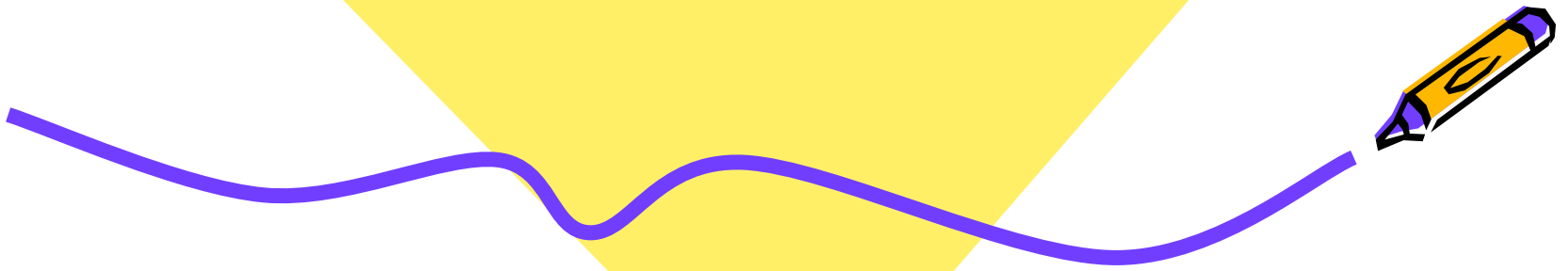
# Possible Consumer Product Safety Areas

- Issuing necessary recalls of defective firearms.
- Standards for gun storage devices.
- Product safety features
  - Increased trigger pressure.
  - Internal trigger locks.
  - Indicators that show whether the chamber of the gun is loaded.





**Legislation Matters  
and We Must Speak Up**



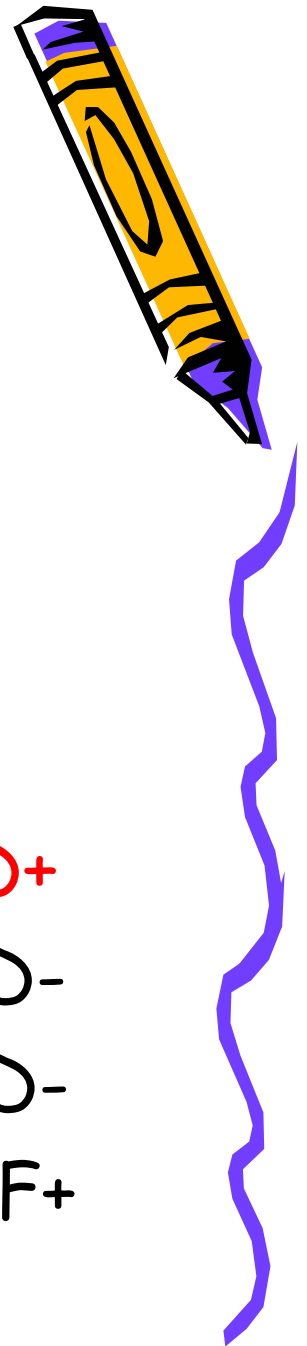


**"Power concedes nothing  
without a demand. It never  
did and it never will."**



Frederick Douglass

# Brady Campaign 2005 State Report Card



- Connecticut A-
- Illinois A-
- New York B+
- District of Columbia B



- Michigan D+
- Ohio D-
- Texas D-
- Florida F+



# Michigan's rating is based on

- A person can buy more than one handgun during a month.
- The Attorney General can not regulate guns.
- Gun owners are not held accountable for leaving guns assessible to children.
- No limitations on assault weapons.
- Police can't place limits on concealed weapons, such as prior training.
- No standards for locking devices that are to be sold with guns.



Further, recent legislation has gone or is going in a direction opposite from child protection.



### Washington D.C.

- 2004, the President and Congress removed the 1994 ban on automatic assault weapons .
- October 2005, President signed into law that gun manufacturers can not be held liable for any injury caused by their product.



### Michigan

- Reduced restrictions on carrying concealed weapons-passed quietly the week the war with Iraq started.
- Dropping the age of hunting with loaded guns to 12 years of age (proposed).
- Moving to make it legal to shoot and kill another person if you feel threatened (proposed).



# Congressional Leadership Examples



- **Senate Majority Leader Dr. Bill Frisk** recognized by the NRA for his leadership on gun rights and for stating his favorite time with his sons is during hunting.
- **Vice President Cheney** as head of the Senate states clearly about his love of hunting with friends.
- **Michigan Congressman Nick Smith** quoted in response to a letter asking for continued ban on assault weapons..."every hunter should have the weapons of his choice".
- And numerous other male members of Congress are recognized by the NRA.



# We Can As Individuals.....



- Stay informed about the issue of children and guns.
- Talk to family and friends about gun safety.
- Learn where guns are in your home and in the homes your children visit.
- Remove guns from your home or be sure they are unloaded and locked away from ammunition that is also locked away.
- Teach and model non violence ways to solve conflict.





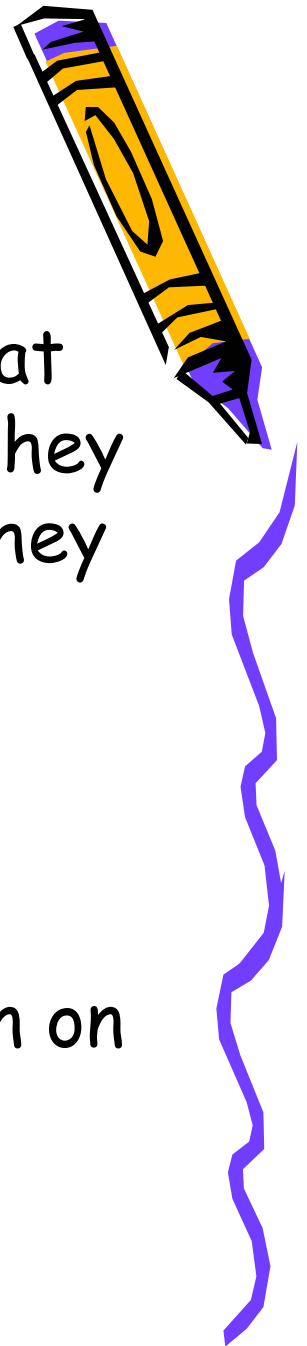
# We Can As Individuals...



- Examine our own TV and other entertainment practices.
- Remove TVs and computers from children's bedrooms.
- Do not let children watch violent TV or purchase game programming.
- Ask that child care limits TV and video viewing.

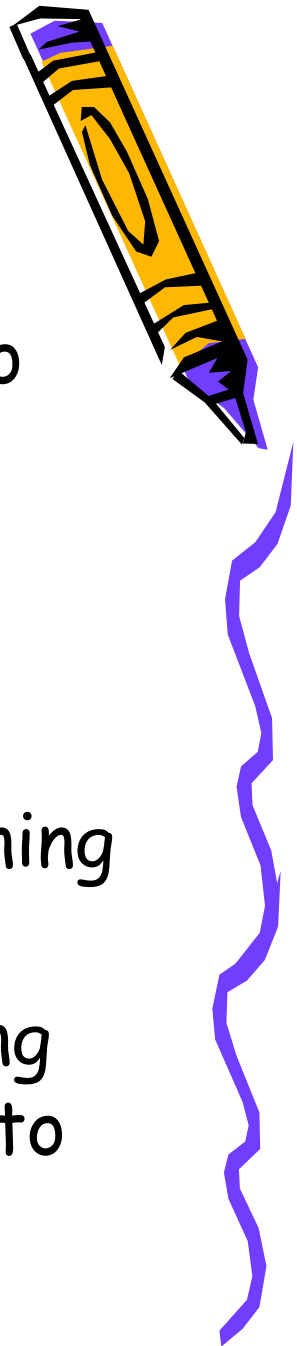


# We Can As Individuals.....



- Call your police department to learn what they do with confiscated firearms. If they sell them back to the public, ask that they be destroyed.
- Educate parents about the truth of children and guns focusing on parents' multiple false beliefs.
- Speak out to help focus public attention on the number of child gun deaths.





# We, As Communities, Can....

- Advocate for physicians and schools to be better trained to discuss this issue with their families.
- Put pressure on existing Legislators to support gun safety legislation.
- Support pro-gun safety candidates running for office.
- Let your wallet be your voice by donating money to programs and groups working to reduce child gun violence.





**Gun Violence Touches All Of  
Our Children Costing This  
Country At Least \$15 Billion  
Annually.**

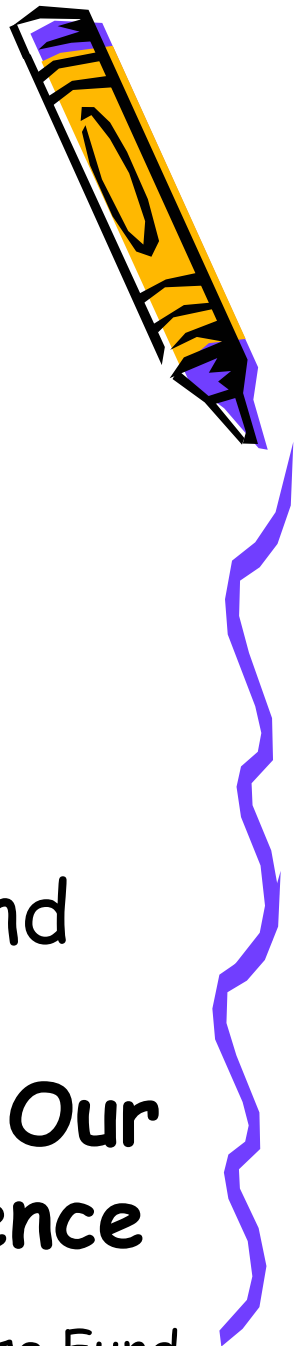
And each of us has a responsibility to address  
this issue.

# America Stands In The World

- First in military technology and defense expenditures.
- First in military exports.
- First in Gross National Product.
- First in the number of millionaires and billionaires.

**And Last In Protecting Our  
Children From Gun Violence**

Source: Children's Defense Fund





We need to decide, as a culture, which is more important -- our right to keep guns or the lives of our children?





**The Test Of The Morality  
Of A Society Is What It  
Does For Its Children.**



Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German Protestant  
theologian who died opposing Hitler's holocaust.



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under the Meetings  
heading with a link of  
MiAEYC Conference

